

## Our graduates Bonnie Stern and Elio Pacheco win 2007 Premier's Awards for excellence

### It's a very tasteful decision.

The 2007 Premier's Awards selection panel has chosen two George Brown graduates responsible for pleasing millions of taste buds. They chose kitchen maven Bonnie Stern, who has launched a thousand dishes; and Elio Pacheco, responsible for making Evian a growing bottled water of choice.

The pair was chosen from among 90 Ontario college graduates nominated for the annual awards, which honour excellence and community contributions of graduates from the province's 24 colleges.

The two awards means George Brown maintains its position as the Ontario college with the second highest number of Premier's Award winners – nine since the awards were established in 1992.

"We're thrilled for Bonnie and Elio and are proud to have played a role in their success and achievements," says President Anne Sado. "They are shining examples of the contribution college graduates are making to Ontario and beyond."

Stern, a culinary management graduate, is a bestselling author of cookbooks, has hosted two national television shows, appears regularly on radio and TV, and writes a weekly newspaper column. She is the owner of the Bonnie Stern School of Cooking and Cookware Shop in Toronto.

As one of Canada's best known chefs and having inspired millions of people to try new dishes, Stern credits George Brown for a solid foundation for her career. "I couldn't have done what I've done without really feeling confident about my chef training."



**Evian North America President Elio Pacheco studied business at George Brown.**

Pacheco, a Business Administration graduate, is president and general manager of Evian North America. Promoted to the job in January 2007, Pacheco turned around Evian's fortunes in just a few months, launching an aggressive marketing strategy and communicating the company's long-standing environmental responsibility, producing a six per cent increase in sales.

He too credits George Brown with providing him with a practical understanding of business. "What George Brown did for me was give me the basics — understanding how business works and how the pieces come together."



**Food maven Bonnie Stern's hospitality program gave her a new career direction.**

The awards recognize outstanding college graduates who have excelled in six categories: creative arts, technology, health sciences, business, community services and recent graduate. The recipients, chosen by a panel of distinguished business and community leaders from among 90 nominees, will receive their awards at a gala celebration dinner in London on Feb. 11.

Each recipient receives an Ontario Premier's Awards for College Graduates medal designed by sculptor Dora de Pedry-Hunt and directs a \$5,000 bursary to his/her graduating college.

See page 2 for profiles of Stern and Pacheco.

## Premier's Award winner Pacheco is making waves in premium water

With people with MBAs and business degrees working for him, Evian North America President Elio Pacheco says many are surprised to learn of his educational credentials: a 1988 diploma in Business Administration from George Brown.

"I think there's a misconception that college doesn't provide a very strong business set-up, but what George Brown did for me was give me the basics — understanding how business works and how the pieces come together."

In fact, Pacheco says he is sometimes "astounded" by the lack of skill and understanding of business he sees in individuals with MBAs and business degrees.

"What I see with many of these graduates is that, while they are very good at problem-solving, they seem to be missing some of the basics and I think that was what I was able to attain from George Brown. I would definitely recommend any individual who wants a business career to start at a college level."

As President and General Manager of Evian North America, Pacheco presides over a huge business that traces its success to a spring in the French Alps. Naturally filtered by alpine



glaciers, Evian is the world's best selling mineral water and is owned by Group Danone, an international company that does \$20 billion in sales yearly and employs 90,000 people worldwide.

Pacheco was named to the position in January 2007 after a successful 14-year career with Group Danone, where he earned a reputation for an entrepreneurial spirit and established an impressive track record of managing and leading brands in highly competitive markets.

Stationed at Evian North America headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, Pacheco is already seeing positive results from his ambitious campaign to turn the company around after several years of sagging sales. After only a few months with Pacheco at the helm, Canadian sales began growing at a rate of six per cent.

When Pacheco graduated from George Brown in 1988, he intended to go on and earn a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Toronto. Before classes started, however, he was offered a job as a junior operations manager with the

Canadian Management Centre of the prestigious American Management Association, the world's largest training and development organization.

While still working for the Canadian Management Centre, Pacheco met and made friends with Philippe-Loïc Jacob, who had just arrived from France to launch Evian in Canada.

In 1993, Pacheco joined Group Danone, the parent company of Evian, as district sales manager in charge of Ontario.

Pacheco enjoyed the competitive environment at Danone and rose rapidly up the 'food chain'. Although he has a reputation for fixing things, the challenge facing Pacheco in 2007 was significant. Pacheco immediately launched an ambitious campaign to turn the company's fortunes around. He restructured his executive team, made plans to launch several new products, and initiated a new marketing strategy that positions Evian as an "affordable luxury." Almost immediately, Pacheco's efforts began paying off. In Canada, within the first few months of his leadership, sales began growing at a rate of six per cent and he's confident U.S. sales will soon follow.

## For Premier's Award winner Stern success means means fun in the kitchen

If not for George Brown, Bonnie Stern might have become a librarian and deprived Canada of one of its brightest culinary stars, not to mention millions of delicious meals.

Stern had just completed a degree in English literature at the University of Toronto when she decided to take some time to indulge her love of cooking before returning to university. By the time she finished the Culinary Management program in 1971, however, her career plans had changed.

"It was really a kind of revelation for me. I had been doing all academics until then and I found that doing something practical and creative and physical and artistic really, really appealed to me."

Stern is owner and president of the internationally respected Bonnie Stern School of Cooking and Cookware Shop in Toronto. A best-selling author of 12 cookbooks, she is also the host of an informative website featuring recipes, tips and products at [www.bonniestern.com](http://www.bonniestern.com) and the publisher of a monthly e-newsletter.

A weekly columnist for the National Post newspaper and a regular on CBC Radio



Sounds Like Canada with Shelagh Roger, Stern has hosted two national television cooking shows, makes guest appearances on a number of other television and radio shows, contributes to a variety of magazines and provided recipes and entertaining tips for a series of classical CDs for Sony Music featuring music and menu compilations.

While Stern has created a unique career for herself in the food industry, she credits George Brown for providing her with a strong foundation to build upon. "I feel I have become more of a communicator than a chef, but I couldn't have done what I've done without really feeling confident about my chef training."

Stern says that when she started her cooking school in 1973, her goal was to help people have more fun in the kitchen, eat more healthfully and nourish their families and friends with delicious food. That goal has never changed. And it's the reason Stern has become one of the best-known and most-loved food specialists in the country.

"I graduated from George Brown in 1971 and opened my cooking school in 1973. When I look back, I'm amazed I had the nerve to do it. But I wanted to transfer the knowledge that I learned as a chef to people, to take the mystery out of cooking and encourage them to have fun in the kitchen instead of it being a chore."

Since then, Stern has taught countless people that cooking can be easy, fun and delicious through her cooking school, her cookbooks, two national cooking shows — Bonnie Stern Cooks and Bonnie Stern Entertains — television and radio guest appearances and newspaper columns.

Over the years, her cooking school has developed an international reputation that reflects both Stern's culinary excellence and her experience studying with food specialists from around the world. She also leads team-building classes for major corporations and conducts HeartSmart cooking classes for health professionals. In addition, she develops recipes for major food companies, conducts product knowledge sessions for cookware manufacturers and holds private chef training update sessions for resort owners.

## Our other excellent 2007 Premier's Award nominees:

### An expert in machines that keep people alive

Stephen Harwood, a 1979 Nursing graduate, is involved in cutting-edge research and experimentation using highly specialized medical devices, such as implantable or external devices that can take over the function of the heart or lungs. He is currently Manager of Cardiopulmonary Specialties and Co-ordinator of Mechanical Circulatory Assistance at the University Health Network, Toronto General Hospital. A Certified Cardiovascular Perfusionist, Stephen Harwood leads the country's largest Perfusion department, located in Toronto General Hospital, Canada's largest cardiovascular surgical centre and one of its major transplant centres. He has significantly increased the profile of Cardiovascular Perfusion within the hospital and the global medical community. In the past year, he participated in two North American medical firsts, including the first use of an external artificial lung called the Novalung, keeping a 21-year-old mother alive while awaiting a heart and lung transplant.

### New ECE grad plans to open a school

Tolu Quadri graduated from George Brown with an Early Childhood diploma in 2006 – but she already has experience and ambition. Quadri has worked as an early childhood educator in Jamaica, China and Nigeria, even while she continues her studies at university. Earlier this year, Quadri won a prestigious Harry Jerome Award Award – honouring black achievement in the Toronto community – for her academic and community leadership. Quadri loves to write, especially poems and songs, and has had some of her work published. After completing her ECE degree next year, Quadri plans to open a school with her two sisters, Sheyi and Tope, also graduates of the George Brown ECE program. Quadri says her goal in life is “to do as much as I can to make a difference and a positive change in the lives of others.”

### Intervenor helping Deaf-blind triplets

Mackenzie Levert graduated from George Brown's Intervenor for Deaf-Blind Persons program in 2001. Now an Intervenor with the Deafblind Children's Fund, Spring, Texas, she is working a miracle with seven-year-old Zoë Dunn in Texas, reminiscent of Helen Keller and her teacher Annie Sullivan in *The Miracle Worker*. Zoë and her sisters Sophie and Emma are the only known deaf-blind triplets in the world. Within six months of working with Zoë, Levert accomplished more than anyone had dared to hope. Zoë, who could only make three signs at first, is now able to make 15 signs, understand many, many more and is beginning to show signs of independence, preferring to walk instead of being carried. Levert has been featured on two Dr. Phil shows about the triplets and in a documentary called *Through Your Eyes*.



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY GEORGE BROWN!** George Brown College officially turned 40 years old on Nov. 22 – and the occasion was marked with a party at every college location – from main campuses to far-flung childcare centres. Hundreds of students, staff and former staff sang Happy Birthday to the college and shared a piece of birthday cake. In the top photo Sandy Lew, project administrative assistant in the Office of Special Projects and Community Partnerships serves cake to Financial Planning student Anna Gordeyeva. At St. James Campus, President Anne Sado joined a staff group leading the singing (bottom photo), from left: Pam Doyle, Cindy Carey, Margaret Whittleton, Crystal Kotow-Sullivan, Tom Tomassi, and Anne Sado. For more birthday photos go to [www.georgebrown.ca/40celebration](http://www.georgebrown.ca/40celebration)



### GEORGE WHO?

Third Year Hospitality Management student Shima Zarghami chats with George Brown himself...well, at least it's Jonathan Gould of George Brown's School of Design impersonating the college's namesake during the its 40th anniversary celebration on Nov. 22. For Shima, George Brown was just a college name – not an important 19th century Toronto journalist and politician. “I didn't know anything about him,” she sheepishly admits. Gould made a dramatic presentation as Brown following a special lecture about George Brown (the man) by 2007 Governor-General's Award winning author Carolyn Smardz Frost. She outlined his anti-slavery work in Toronto, while lecture respondents lauded his commitment to equality, human rights, public education and his humanist values. President Anne Sado announced that plaques honouring George Brown would be installed at St. James and Casa Loma campuses.

# President Anne Sado

First let me start by wishing everyone at the college a Happy Holiday season. It's been a busy time since we started the school year and I hope you and your families will have a restful and joyful break.

Last month I talked about the skills shortage affecting our province and how colleges like George Brown could help address the issue if given the opportunity to expand by the provincial government. Ontario's colleges are looking to the government to let us help solve the problem and have proposed a comprehensive skills strategy that addresses this looming crisis head-on.

To make Ontario the most accessible and user-friendly jurisdiction in Canada for skills training and lifelong upgrading, we advocate a six point plan. I think it's important to share that plan with you so we all understand the direction we need to move in as a system.

**1. Implement policies and programs to increase post secondary attainment rates to 75 percent.** Currently, about two thirds of Ontario's workforce has attained a postsecondary education. College participation must increase by 20 percent or 30,000 full time students over the next four years. This will require new investment to fund the physical expansion at colleges and new approaches at the elementary and secondary school levels to better prepare students.

**2. Significantly increase the retraining of the workforce.** Ontario has fallen behind many other jurisdictions in retraining and providing new skills training for its workforce. Studies show

private firms that invest in employee skills earn higher profits than those that do not. The government must consider a program to stimulate investments in skills training.

**3. Remove barriers for foreign-trained immigrants.** More than 80,000 skilled and educated immigrants come to Ontario each year, and the number is growing. We need to increase our support for programs to address this need across the college system and develop common systems and approaches for recognizing credentials and providing access to specific, further training.

**4. Make it easier for students to transfer between university and college.** Ontario businesses would benefit from a larger number of workers who are both college and university educated and trained. Yet many students are discouraged from achieving a stronger skill set and education, because it is too difficult to transfer their credits between institutions. Ontario must become a leader in creating clear and transparent pathways between all types of postsecondary education, including apprenticeship.

**5. Better market and promote skills-based education.** The value and offerings of colleges have dramatically changed in the past 40 years. Employers have helped us achieve this. The challenge is that perceptions and attitudes of parents and potential adult learners haven't necessarily changed. We need resources to enhance the public's understanding of the career options available in Ontario, and the role colleges can play in preparing graduates to meet the skill needs of the economy.

**6. Raise investment in Ontario colleges to at least the national average.** Ontario lags the national average in funding to the college system. Currently, the per student grant for colleges are the lowest in the country. At a minimum, operating funding for Ontario colleges should be consistent with the Canadian average. To achieve this, Ontario colleges' operating funding must increase by \$400M by 2011, significant investments must be made into capital repairs and improvements and

the federal funding announced for postsecondary education in the 2007 federal budget must be strictly dedicated to post-secondary education.

By addressing these six areas, the Provincial government can ensure Ontario's Colleges continue to play a central role – not only in maintaining our current output of employable skilled workers, but increasing that number exponentially to address increasing economic realities.



**CRAFT SALE AT CASA LOMA** - Fashion student Tegan Stadyk checks out the colourful scarves created by Chris Caron in the United Way Fundraising sale at Casa Loma on Nov. 28. Caron, a college advisor in the International and Immigrant Education Department, dyed the wool as well as knitted the scarves. The sale, which also included used technology program textbooks, raised more than \$700 for the charity funding agency.



George Brown News is a publication of the Marketing and Communications Department, George Brown College at 200 King St. East, Room 542E, Toronto, ON M5T 2T9  
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